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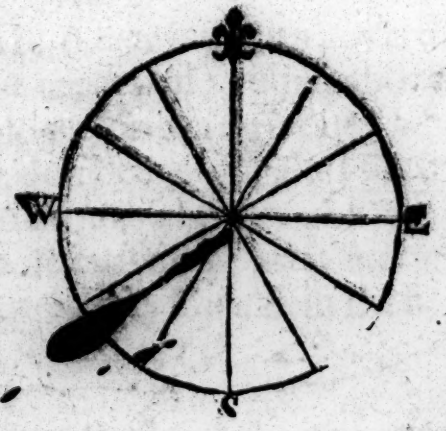
SIR BENIAMIN RUDYERDS SPEECH.

Concerning Bishops, Deanes, and Chapters.

At a Committee of the Whole House.



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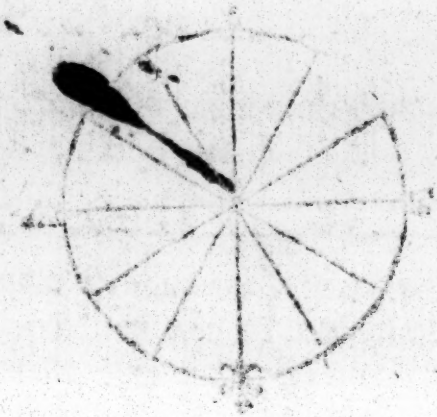

Sir *Beniamin* RUDYERD, his SPEECH.

Mr. HIDE,

WEE are now upon a very great buſineſſe, ſo great indeed, as it requires our ſoundeſt, our ſaddeſt conſideration, our beſt judgment for the preſent, our utmoſt foreſight for the future.

But Sir, one thing doth exceedingly trouble me, it turnes me round about, it makes my whole reaſon vertiginous, which is, that ſo many doe believe, againſt the wiſedome of all ages, that now there can be no reformation without deſtruction, as if every ſicke Body muſt be preſently knockt in the head, as paſt hope of cure.

Religion was firſt & beſt planted in Cities, God did ſpread his net, where moſt might be

caught, Cities had Biſhops, and Presbyters were the Seminaries, out of which were ſent labourers by the Biſhops, to propagate and cultivate the Goſpell. The Clergie then lived wholly upon the free-will offerings and bounty of the people.

Afterwards, when Kings and States grew to be Chriſtians, the outwatd ſettlement of the Church grew up with them. They erected Biſhopricks, founded Cathedrall Churches, endowed them with large poſſeſſions: Landlords built Pariſh Churches, gleab'd them with ſome portion of land, for which they have ſtill a right of preſentation.

I do confeſſe that ſome of our Biſhops have had ambitious, dangerous aimes, and have ſo ſtill, that in their Government there are very great enormities, but I am not of their opinion, who believe, that there is an innate ill quality in Epiſcopacy, like a ſpecifical property, which is a refuge, not a reaſon.

I hope there is not originall ſin in Epiſcopacie; and though there were, yet may the calling bee as well reformed, as the perſon regenerated. Biſhops have governed the Church for fivfteene hundred yeares without interruption, and no man wil ſay, but that God hath ſaved ſoules in all thoſe times under

under their government. Let them be reduced according to the usage of antient churches in the best times, so restrained as they may not be able hereafter to shame the calling. I love not those that hate to be reformed, and doe therefore thinke them worthy of the more strict, the more close reformation.

We have often complained, that Bishops are too absolute, too singular. Although Cathedrall Churches are now for the most part but receptacles of Droanes and Nonresidents, yet some good men may be found or placed there to be assessors with the Bishops, to assist them in actions of moment, in causes of importance; there is maintenance already provided for them. If either in Bishopricks, or Cathedral Churches there be much, som may be pared off, to relieve them that have too little. If yet more may be spared, it may be imployed to the setting up of a preaching Ministery through the whole Kingdome. And until this be done, although we are Christians, yet we are not a Christian State. There are some places in *England* that are not in Christendome, the people are so ignorant, they live so without God in the world, for which Parliaments are to answer both to God and Man. Let us look to it, for it lyes like one of the burdens of the Prophet *Esay*, heavie and flat upon Parliaments.

I have often seriously considered with my selfe, what strong concurrent motives & causes did meet together in that time, when Abbeys and Monsteries were overthrowne. Certainly Gods hand was the greatest, for he was most offended. The prophane superstitions, the abhominable idolatries, the filthy

nefandous wickedneſſe of their lives did ſtincke in Gods noſtrils, did call downe for vengeance, for reformation. A good party of religious men were Zealous Inſtruments in that great worke, as likewiſe many covetous ambitious perſons, gaping for fat morſels, and did luſtily drive it on.

But, Mr. *Hide*, there was a principall Parliamentary motive, which did facilitate the reſt: For it was propounded in Parliament, that the acceſſion of Abbey lands would ſo inrich the Crowne, as the people ſhould never be put to pay ſubſidies againe. This was plauſible both to Court and Countrey. Beſides, with the over-plus there ſhould bee maintained a ſtanding army of fourty thouſand men for a perpetuall defence of the Kingdome. This was ſafety at home, terror and honour abroad: the Parliament would make all ſure.

Gods part; religion, by his bleſſing hath bin reaſonably well preſerved; but it hath beene ſaved as by fire: for the reſt is conſumed and vaniſhed: the people have payed ſubſidies ever ſince, and wee are now in no very good caſe to pay an Army.

Let us beware, M. *Hyde*, that we do not look with a worldly, carnall, evill eye upon Church lands, let us cleare our ſight, ſearch our hearts, that wee may have unmixt and ſincere ends, without the leaſt thought of ſaving our owne purſes: Church lands will ſtill be fitteſt to maintaine Church men, by a proportionable and orderly diſtribution.

Wee are very ſtrict and curions to uphold our own propriety, and there is great reaſon for it; are

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the Cleargy only a sort of men who have no propriety at all in that which is called theirs? I am sure they are Englishmen, they are subjects.

If we pull downe Bishopricks, and pull downe Cathedrall Churches, in a short time we must bee forc'd to pull downe Colledges too; for Schollers will live and dye there as in Cells, if there be not considerable preferment to invite them abroad. And the example we are making now, will be an easie temptation to the lesse-pressing necessities of future times.

This is the next way to bring in Barbarisme, to make the Cleargy an unlearned contemptible vocation, not to be desired but by the basest of the people; and then where shall we find men able to convince an adversary?

A Cleargy man ought to have a far greater proportion to live upon, then any other man of an equall condition. He not bred to multiply threepences, it becomes him not to live mechanically, and sordidly: he must be given to hospitality. I doe know my selfe a Cleargy-man, no dignitary, whose Bookes have cost him a thousand pounds, which when he dyes, may be worth to his wife and children, about two hundred.

It will be a shamefull reproach to so flourishing a Kingdome as this, to have a poore beggerly Cleargy. For my part, I think nothing too much, nothing too good for a good Minister, a good Cleargyman. They ought least to want, who best know how to abound. Burning and shining lights doe well deserve to be set in good Candle-sticks.

Master

Master *Hyde*, I am as much for reformation, for purging and maintaining Religion, as any man whatsoever: but I professe, I am not for innovation, demolition, nor abolition.

FINIS.

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